

**What is Claimed is:**

1. An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which is at least 90% homologous to SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the nucleic acid molecule encodes a polypeptide having RNase III activity.
2. The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 comprising SEQ ID NO: 1.
3. An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide which is at least 90% homologous to SEQ ID NO:2 wherein the polypeptide has RNase III activity.
4. The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 3 which encodes a polypeptide comprising SEQ ID NO:2.
5. A vector which comprises the nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or claim 3.
6. An isolated host cell comprising the vector of claim 5.
7. The host cell of claim 6 wherein the host cell is a mammalian host cell.
8. An isolated host cell comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 or claim 3.
9. The host cell of claim 8 wherein the host cell is a mammalian host cell.
10. A composition which comprises the nucleic acid

molecule of claim 1 or claim 3 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

11. A composition which comprises the vector of claim 5 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

12. A method for producing a polypeptide comprising culturing the host cell of claim 8 under conditions in which the nucleic acid molecule is expressed, thereby producing a polypeptide.